YEAH, WE'RE TRYING TO FORGET IT TOO **THE WORD** {pages 10-11}

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The price of preparedness

Decision to shut down MTA and evacuate cost money and business While some New Yorkers say Bloomberg overreacted, others say better safe than sorry {page 02}

▶ Due to Metro-North closures and the MTA just beginning to come back online, Grand Central Station was desolate yesterday morning.

New York

Hola señor Bloomberg, ¿Qué pasa?

'Miguel Bloombito' gives New Yorkers tips on Twitter
But his Spanglish is not a joke, some say {page 03}

The big menu of the Big Easy

New Orleans is known mostly for its Mardi Gras celebration, but we celebrate its grub {page 15}

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Six deaths in greater New York area

At least 37 deaths have been caused by Irene nationwide, according to reports. In and around New York City, six deaths and serious injuries have so far been attributed to the storm.

Police said Jose Sierra went to a marina on City Island on Sunday to check on his boat. There, he reportedly fell into the water and drowned.

That same day, a 46-year-old man was found dead in floodwaters in Bristol, Conn. Cops said Shane Seaver was canoeing on East Main Street and capsized.

In Rockland County, a man trying to save a child stranded on a flooded street was electrocuted by live wires. The child had been caught in the wires and is in serious condition at a burn unit.

In Kearny, N.J., Ronald Dawkins died after he was trying to get to his office building. Officials said he was wading through a flooded road when he was swept into a drainage ditch. On Sunday night, the NYPD's Aviation Unit was called to help five people whose raft had capsized in the Croton River in Westchester County. Peter Engel, 53, was thrown from the raft after it flipped in choppy waters. Rescuers pulled him onto a police boat, but he died at the hospital. METRO/AB

Sierra

Ready for storm, but at what cost?

Some New Yorkers lament 42-hour shutdown of MTA Others deem evacuation unnecessary But FDNY captain says safety is priceless

CHIP SOMODEVILLA/GETTY IMAGES

Anthony Cali uses a hand saw to cut up a tree downed by Hurricane Irene along West Houston Street yesterday.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg showed New Yorkers he will do whatever it takes to fight Mother Nature — but at what cost to the city and his reputation?

A 42-hour shutdown of the city's transit system displaced more than 5 million riders who normally ride the rails on weekends. An MTA spokeswoman said they don't have an estimate yet of how much the shutdown cost them. But if every one of those riders bought a $2.50 single-ride MetroCard, the closure would cost NYC Transit nearly $13 million just in farebox revenue.

$7B

Potential price tag on damage from Irene, according to The New York Times, largely from property damage in New York and New Jersey.

$45M

Estimated losses to Atlantic City's casino industry in gaming revenues over the weekend.

In Queens, cabbie Muhammed Yakubu lamented the $400 he could have made driving Saturday and Sunday, when New Yorkers were told to keep off the streets.

"They kept on talking about it 24/7 and getting everyone scared," he said. "I think it was too much."

The other cost may be to Bloomberg's image among New Yorkers, some of whom said he was merely trying to redeem himself after a botched response to the December blizzard.

"How many people did they evacuate in Zone A that they didn't need to?" wondered Robert Champeau, 37, a Greenpoint resident who was asked to leave his home, but instead stayed.

But Staten Island fire captain James Melvin — whose firefighters rescued 61 people trapped in an apartment complex filled with water — said saving lives is priceless.

"I think they did a great job," he said. "You've got to use a little caution."

ALISON BOWEN
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GETTY IMAGES

Still in the dark

NEW YORK. More than 60,000 homes in the city lost power over the weekend due to the storm, and more than half those homes still remained without power as of yesterday afternoon. According to Con Edison, 32,000 homes were still in the dark, many of those outages due to downed trees on power lines. Queens was the worst hit; 21,000 homes there didn't have power, followed by Staten Island. METRO/CB

Complacency next time?

NEW YORK. The next time the city orders residents to leave their homes for a hurricane or other natural disaster, New Yorkers may not listen, warned Ronaldo Dailey, a Red Hook shop owner who decided to ride out the storm in the apartment above his store. "People are going to say, 'Oh no, you made me do it last time, and it wasn't worth it. You were wrong.'" METRO/CB

In the news

Bloomie: Quinn for mayor, 2013

You can count on Michael Bloomberg to campaign in 2013. The New York Times reported yesterday that the mayor has privately said that he will support City Council Speaker Christine Quinn when she hopes to succeed him as mayor in 2013. METRO/AB

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EMILY ANNE EPSTEIN/METRO

Hurricane Irene. Rain delay

▶ Hungarian student Julia Takacs, 22, rests by her companions' baggage in Newark Airport.

Escape from New York — in time

New York's airports reopened yesterday after closing for Hurricane Irene. But unfortunately for Hungarian student Julia Takacs, 22, her flight home isn't until Friday, Sept. 2, so she will be sleeping in Newark Airport until then. "They gave us a camping bed, a pillow and a blanket," she said. ● METRO/EAE

¿Viva Bloombito? Mayor Web spoof

● New Twitter handle makes fun of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's 'gringo' accent ● But immigration advocates claim broken Spanish is no laughing matter

Hurricane Irene has come and gone, but it left @ElBloombito in its wake.

Miguel Bloombito is a parody Twitter handle — created by an Inwood stay-at-home mom — that went viral this weekend with more than 12,000 people tuning in to the mockery of Mayor Michael Bloomberg's broken Spanish.

"I was stuck in my apartment watching Hurricane Irene updates and Bloomberg started speaking Spanish," explains creator Rachel Figueroa-Levin, 25. "It was really funny."

Figueroa-Levin, a self-proclaimed "Jewyorican," started tweeting on Aug. 27 with an instant classic: "Hola Newo Yorko! El stormo grande is mucho dangeroso!"

"Spanglish is hard to pull off if you're not Latin," she said, adding: "I think it's good that he tries."

▶ Figueroa-Levin, aka El Bloombito

Bloomberg even referred to his online alter ego yesterday at a press conference.

"My Spanish skills, I can tell you, get better little by little, but it's difficult — I'm 69," he said, *en Espanol*, in his trademark monotone accent, responding to a reporter's question about the Twitter character. "It's difficult to learn a new language."

But not everyone's laughing. At least one immigration advocate says Bloomberg's Spanish skills are not a joke — and that his attempts with the language do more harm than help.

"Him speaking in Spanish is not for the Spanish population to better understand him," criticized Adriana Escandon, an advocate for the New Immigrant Community Empowerment organization. She claims it's more of a political maneuver for the benefit of the mayor's image and ambitions.

In emergency situations, Escandon said, "it would not be safe" to listen to Bloomberg alone.

As for El Bloombito, Figueroa-Levin said it's not a political statement, but just a lighthearted jab at "El Mayorador."

EMILY ANNE EPSTEIN
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Killings as more defect Syrian army

An armored Syrian force surrounded a town near Homs yesterday and fired heavy machine guns after the defection of tens of soldiers from the area, activists and residents said.

Since the demise of Muammar Gaddafi's rule over Libya, activists and residents have reported increasing defections among Syrian troops. They say there have been desertions in eastern Deir al-Zor province, northwestern Idlib province, the Homs countryside and the outskirts of Damascus, where President Bashar al-Assad's forces fought gun battles with defectors on Sunday.

At least 40 light tanks and armored vehicles plus 20 buses of troops and government Military Intelligence deployed at the highway entrance of Rastan, 12 miles north of the city of Homs, and began firing heavy machine guns at the town, two residents said. REUTERS

"The regime's political control on the army had seemed unbreakable, but that is no longer the case."

A SYRIAN POLITICAL ANALYST WHO DID NOT WANT TO BE NAMED BECAUSE OF FEAR FOR HIS SAFETY

ERIC FEFERBERG/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

Libya. Roundup

▶ A rebel Libyan fighter stands on top of a machine gun as anti-Gaddafi forces head to his hometown of Sirte.

Gaddafi remains at large

The wife of Muammar Gaddafi and other members of his family took refuge in Algeria yesterday, but the whereabouts of the fugitive former strongman himself remained a mystery. A senior rebel officer said Gaddafi's son Khamis had been killed in a clash outside of Tripoli. Meanwhile, rebel forces converged on Gaddafi's hometown of Sirte. REUTERS

Scotland not planning on extraditing Libyan killer

LONDON. Scotland announced yesterday it had no plans to request the extradition of the Libyan convicted of the 1988 bombing of a U.S.-bound airliner over the Scottish town of Lockerbie. Abdel Basset al-Megrahi was found guilty of bombing Pan Am flight 103 while en route from London to New York on December 21, 1988. A total of 270 people were killed.

Megrahi was sentenced to life imprisonment in Scotland in 2001, but released two years ago on compassionate grounds and returned to Libya because he was suffering from advanced terminal prostate cancer and was thought to have months to live. REUTERS

Hard time?

Megrahi is living in a palatial house in upmarket Tripoli, according to reports, though a reporter who saw him said he seemed "at death's door."

UN warns of bird flu mutations

ROME. The United Nations warned of a possible major resurgence of bird flu and said a mutant strain of the H5N1 virus was spreading in Asia and elsewhere.

The UN's Food and Agriculture Organization urged increased surveillance and preparation for a potential outbreak of the virus, which it says has infected 565 people since it first appeared in 2003, killing 331 of them. REUTERS

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Irene costs restart budget battle in DC

Storm costs could come to billions of dollars ◗ Republicans want budget cuts to offset disaster aid ◗ FEMA pauses rebuilding to allocate relief funds

▶ Highway 12 between Cape Hatteras and the mainland was destroyed by Hurricane Irene in Rodanthe, N.C.

Washington's never-ending budget battle threatened to snarl the recovery from Hurricane Irene as a top Republican said yesterday that any federal aid will have to be offset by spending cuts elsewhere.

"Yes there's a federal role, yes we're going to find the money. We're just going to make sure that there are savings elsewhere," Representative Eric Cantor, the No. 2 Republican in the House, told Fox News.

Democrats who oversee disaster funding in the Senate said they won't cut other programs to boost emergency aid.

"It makes no sense to cut programs that help respond to future disasters in order to pay for emergencies that have already occurred," Democratic Senator Mary Landrieu said in a prepared statement.

Irene killed at least 30 people and caused substantial property damage from North Carolina to Vermont over the weekend. Cantor's Virginia district was among the areas hit by the storm, and was the epicenter of an earthquake last week.

Obama administration officials said they had no estimate of the storm's cost and were still assessing the damage, but other elected officials and companies have indicated it will likely amount to billions of dollars.

The administration may have to ask Congress for additional funding at a time when lawmakers are debating further budget cuts.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency has suspended funding for some rebuilding programs from earlier disasters to ensure that its disaster-relief fund will not run out of money, according to agency administrator Craig Fugate.

President Barack Obama has signed declarations committing the federal government to helping states from North Carolina to New Hampshire cover disaster-response costs. REUTERS

New Jersey

Raging waterways caused dramatic flooding yesterday across New Jersey, as the state's rivers and creeks rose from the force of Hurricane Irene. Several rivers had not yet crested, and the rising waters threatened to smash longtime flood records. Seven people were confirmed dead.

Massachusetts

Western Massachusetts was hit especially hard by the heavy rains, and more than 500,000 customers in Massachusetts remained without power. A town employee from Southbridge, Mass., was electrocuted by a downed power line, authorities said.

Polygamist leader sent to hospital

SAN ANTONIO. Polygamist leader Warren Jeffs, imprisoned for sexually assaulting two girls he had taken as "spiritual wives," was in critical condition yesterday suffering from dehydration, Texas prison officials said.

Jeffs, 55, who was sentenced to 130 years on Aug. 9, had been refusing to eat properly and was being treated for weakness and related conditions, said Jason Clark, a Texas Department of Criminal Justice spokesman. REUTERS

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U.S. Large Cent - 1803 Large Date Small Fraction	Up To	$1,250
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- ☐ Carson City Silver Dollars
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— *J. Grace*

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— *A. Davis*

I heard about this store from the radio and as soon as I got the chance I came to sell my unused jewelry. It was a great & friendly service and I will be back!
— *J. Simek*

My service was exceptional!
— *C. Sweeney*

Very informative & professional. A relaxed atmosphere & experience.
— *D. Rees*

The staff was helpful and friendly. I was able to take old jewelry and walk away with a handsome amount of money.
— *D. Smith*

I was offered a certain amount at one place and when I told RCFG the amount they beat the price by a good amount. People are very friendly and courteous.
— *J. Bloomquist*

Had fun selling my old jewelry that was broken. Received some extra cash for Springtime and our new puppy. I would recommend RCFG!
— *C. Lang*

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THE WORD

Metro's **Dorothy Robinson** shares her take on the world of gossip @dorothyatmetro dorothy.robinson@metro.us

Lil Jon on making the party happen

ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

▶ Lil Jon loves songs about alcoholic beverages.

While **Lil Jon** had to skip town right before the big show at Sunday's VMAs, he had a moment to talk to Metro about how he's kept busy the past year — and how he's going to be the new **Celine Dion** (our words, not his).

"I've been doing a lot of DJing around the world. I just finished the new single and dropped it — 'Drink,' featuring **LMFAO**. I'm working on the album 'Party Animal.' Should be out next year," he told us. "And I have a residency in Vegas at Surrender. I'm there every two weeks. It's great. I never thought I'd be doing it like **Dean Martin** or **Siegfried and Roy** and those guys, but I'm there like them. It's cool."

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DOROTHY ROBINSON'S WORD BLOG

With "Drink," Lil Jon is becoming the go-to guy for beverage anthems, and he's OK with that. "I thought we couldn't top 'Shots' for a party song, but it's right up there with 'Shots,'" he says. "When you hear the record, it makes you want to go to the club and drink and party. A little push helps."

"Drink," "Shots" — maybe if he calls his next single, "Big Gulp," he can actually make some money in the music industry.

— With additional reporting by Ned Ehbar

Kelly Rowland on Beyonce's baby

Of course, now that the world knows about **Beyonce**'s baby, **Kelly Rowland** wants you all to know that she knew before all of us, thankyouverymuch. "I have known for quite a while," B's Destiny's Child bandmate told People on Sunday night about the happy disclosure. "And she's happy, and **Jay** is happy, and that's all that counts."

Rowland

Which is translated as: "You do know that I used to be in a group with her, right? And do you want some proof that I'm actually still close with her? How about this: I totally knew before any of you press punks did!"

The feed ...

▶ Checking in with some of Hollywood's biggest names to see what they've been up to — in their own words, in 140 characters or fewer.

Today, Kelly Osbourne is questioning her friend's plans, Kirstie Alley is full of love, Daniel Tosh has standards to maintain and Jonah Hill has been listening to his detractors too much.

▶ **@MissKellyO**
my friend omar just confessed that if he ever has children he wants to call the girl 'focus' and the boy 'trumpet'.... thoughts?

▶ **@kirstiealley**
Ok...so I love everybody in the entire flippin universe again!!!!!

▶ **@danieltosh**
if your favorite beastie boys song isn't 'high plains drifter' then we can never make love.

▶ **@JonahHill**
I bet skinny Jonah Hilll isn't as funny as fat Jonah Hill.

Talking points

Brad Pitt to the rescue

Brad Pitt has been playing heroes for so long, it must come naturally to him now. The actor reportedly jumped in to rescue a woman from being trampled on the set of his latest film, "World War Z," currently filming in Scotland, according to the Scottish Sun. Pitt's rescue attempt happened during a dangerous scene involving 700 panicking extras. "I don't think she could believe it when Brad picked her up," a source says. "He didn't have time to speak to her as it was midshoot. But she said afterward how grateful she was, despite having a badly grazed knee."

▶ Spears

Britney Spears' secrets

Britney Spears insists that, despite years of being an international celebrity, people don't really know the real her. "I can be pretty guarded with my personal life and I've learned that's OK," Spears tells Pop Justice in an interview. "Sometimes it's our secrets that define us." And despite any troubles her fame has caused her, that doesn't mean she'd be opposed to sons Sean and Jayden following her into show business. "I'd definitely keep an eye on them, but if that's what they wanted to do, then I'd let them go after it. I'd just be very protective," she says. "I wouldn't want them to go into it feeling fearful."

Oh, to be a fly on the wall

Jake Gyllenhaal's ears must've been burning, as two of his exes got together for lunch recently. **Reese Witherspoon**, just back from a Hawaiian vacation, met up with country singer **Taylor Swift** for lunch in Beverly Hills over the weekend, according to Us Weekly. The two hit it off so well that Witherspoon even gave Swift a lift home. Swift sat out Sunday night's MTV Video Music Awards, but she had a good excuse: She was performing a concert next door at the Staples Center.

Baldwin hunkers down

While Hurricane Irene caused damage up and down the East Coast of the U.S., Alec Baldwin wasn't that impressed. He and girlfriend Hilaria Thomas hunkered down in East Hampton, where the "30 Rock" star provided updates on their condition. "Sweating out the hurricane. If we go, we're going in style," he wrote Saturday night while the couple dined at a nearby restaurant. "Tomorrow, yoga on surfboards!"

▶ Baldwin

myentertainment

Girls run the world (at least at the VMAs)

The MTV Video Music Awards are all about shock and awe, but this year it was mostly the ladies who delivered on that front. Here are the pictorial highlights of the winning women, a few dudes and one Lady who looks like a dude.

1. Looking like a cross between Ralph Macchio and Paul from "The Wonder Years," Lady Gaga opened the show (and stayed in character throughout) as her alter-ego, Jo Calderone. Gaga took home trophies for "Born This Way," for Best Video With a Message and Best Female Video.

2. Beyonce finished her rousing rendition of "Love on Top" by patting her barely visible baby bump. Are people calling that fetus Babyonce yet? If not, we want credit! Mama Beyonce took home a statue for Best Choreography in a video for "Run the World (Girls)."

3. So Selena Gomez apparently didn't dump Justin Bieber, center, or his snake, left. Yes, he is holding a snake in his right hand. Biebs would later hold a moon man statue, which he won for Best Male Video, with "U Smile."

4. Nicki Minaj got colorful and conical with her hair and her ice cream necklace. Minaj won the award for Best Hip-Hop Video for "Super Bass."

5. Tyler, the Creator does not look too pleased about his win for Best New Artist.

6. Katy Perry may have broken records for her outfit, but the singer, who had the most nominations for VMAs this year, only took home three Moonmen. Not to diminish her achievement though, that's three more VMAs than we have — and one was Video of the Year for "Firework."

1,5,6. STEVE GRANITZ/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES
2. JEFF KRAVITZ/FILMMAGIC/GETTY IMAGES
3. KEVIN MAZUR/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES
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TV watch list

▶ Sure, The Situation has his own line of vodka, but Handler named-checked the spirit in her best-seller, "Are You There Vodka? It's Me, Chelsea."

'Chelsea Lately'

TALK. At the risk of inviting Chelsea Handler and tonight's guest, The Situation, into our late-night lives, we can't resist their vodka stories. **11 p.m., E!**

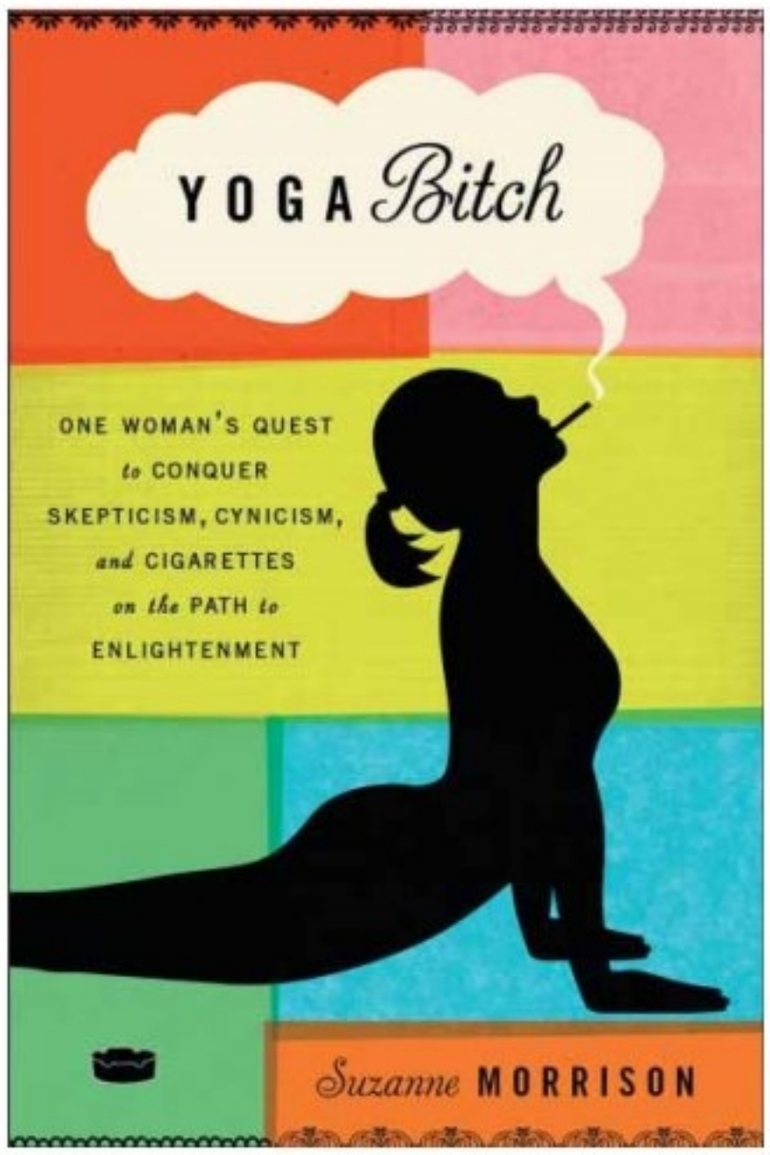
'Quirky'

REALITY. In this new series, designers and engineers at tech company Quirky select products submitted by inventors to develop on the fly. While we wish their premiere episode success, we're also pretty sure the infomercial market doesn't have room for one more tricked-out pasta strainer. **Season premiere, 10 p.m., Sundance**

MONICA WEYMOUTH

Things that make you go: 'Om'

Suzanne Morrison goes on a yogic journey with a healthy dose of skepticism in new memoir
Her unique path to 'enlightenment'


YOGA Bitch
ONE WOMAN'S QUEST to CONQUER SKEPTICISM, CYNICISM, and CIGARETTES on the PATH to ENLIGHTENMENT
Suzanne MORRISON

If you think reading about a quest for spiritual fullness sounds about as spunky as a bran muffin, the new memoir "Yoga Bitch: One Woman's Quest to Conquer Skepticism, Cynicism, and Cigarettes on the Path to Enlightenment," might just change your mind. Author Suzanne Morrison recounts her reformative journey at a two-month yoga retreat in Bali with a sense of humor so wicked it would even make Bikram sweat a little.

"That's part of why I wrote the book," Morrison, who is also an actress, says from her home in Seattle. "The yoga memoirs when I first started writing it were so serious and earnest and self-regarding. And it just seemed very off-putting. I wanted to do something that would be different and fun."

Book signing

Suzanne Morrison
Thursday, 7 p.m.
Good Yoga
73 Calyer St., Brooklyn

And yes, Morrison is aware the basic plot of "Yoga Bitch" — a dissatisfied woman going to Bali in order to find herself — is familiar to a little memoir titled "Eat, Pray, Love," but it doesn't get her chakras riled up.

"I started 'Yoga Bitch' as a show in 2003 so it was before 'Eat, Pray, Love,'" she says. "But when people started talking about [Gilbert's memoir], saying, 'It's just like your book!' That was disconcerting. But then I read it and it was like slaying a dragon. It was just so different."

Although Morrison's quest to Bali wasn't quite as life-changing as she envisioned it being, she hasn't given up on yoga. In fact, she's still a regular practitioner at a studio in Washington. Still, not everyone there is in the know that she's behind a book with such a title. "One of my teachers there does know. But really, I don't talk to them that much. I just go, do yoga and then get out."

DOROTHY ROBINSON
dorothy.robinson@metro.us

Style picks

Two new feminine fragrances

1 Don't say bye to the sweet smells of summer just yet. Coach's new **Poppy Flower** mixes fruit and floral scents and will keep memories of picnics and farmers markets around a little longer. **$45-$85, www.coach.com**

2 Chanel's bold, iris-based perfume, **No. 19** — named after Gabrielle Chanel's birthday (Aug. 19) — gets a femme update this year thanks to the addition of powdery notes. **No. 19 Poudre, $85, www.chanel.com**

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Letters

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Blame game or just the facts?

RE: "HOW LONG CAN WE BLAME W.?": To answer Mr. Cowley's question, you can't unblame someone for something they were clearly responsible for. It's a part of history now. **JONATHAN PERRY, VIA E-MAIL**

John Crowley wrote: "The Obamamaniacs blame Bush for everything." I just felt the need to point out that Mr. Crowley missed a good chance to use the term "Obamaniacs," which would have been more clever and far less redundant. Perhaps my version is harder to pronounce, but we can all agree that it isn't half as silly as that ridiculous "mama" sound one would be forced to make by speaking his out loud. I mean, come now, Mr. Crowley. Our president may need to pull up his big boy pants, but you need to sharpen your big boy wit. **THOMAS MURRAY, PALMYRA, NJ**

Tea Partiers wonder why people get angry with them. It's because they say things that aren't true. They say Obama screwed up the economy and plays the "blame George Bush" game. Leading economists said that when a big enough crash happens, it take 8 to 10 years to recover. That's a fact about economics; it's not a blame game. **HARRY THORN, VIA E-MAIL**

Capital crime: Tax dishonesty

Isn't it ironic how Warren Buffett stated that folks like him should pay more taxes, but at the same time his firm (Berkshire Hathaway) hasn't paid what is owed to the IRS since 2002? Pay up or shut up, Buffett. **RICARDO CUMMINGS, VIA E-MAIL**

Why is anyone who disagrees with the outdated ideology of the right wing in this country branded a socialist? Is letter-writer Mark Barbee more capitalist than Warren Buffett or Bill Gates? **JEAN KAZADI, VIA E-MAIL**

What we need: Jobs not cuts

Instead of ending tax breaks for millionaires and large corporations, or stopping the pork barrel spending, the U.S. debt deal lays the groundwork for substantial cuts to vital federal programs like Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Right now America needs to focus on creating jobs and lowering unemployment rather than cutting spending and undermining the economy. **CHARLES M. QUINN, MAPLE SHADE, NJ**

E-mail your letters: **letters@metro.us**

Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact information.

Horoscope

♍ Virgo **Aug. 23-Sept. 22.** In order to be properly and fairly compensated for your work, you may have to champion your own cause. Don't allow someone who has no idea of what you do to set your pay scale.

♎ Libra **Sept. 23-Oct. 23.** Those in your charge must be made to realize there are reasons for rules and order and that these must be obeyed. Make it clear that unless things are legit, everyone will suffer.

♏ Scorpio **Oct. 24-Nov. 22.** If you attempt to even up the score with someone who has wronged you, chances are you will incur even more complications. Instead of nursing a grudge, forgive and forget.

♐ Sagittarius **Nov. 23-Dec. 21.** Many times we can unwittingly ignore the deserving while catering to someone who has wronged us. This could be the case for you currently, so take care not to do so.

♑ Capricorn **Dec. 22-Jan. 19.** When there are bigger goals to be reached, wasting time and effort on something that will give you merely nominal gratification is wasteful.

♒ Aquarius **Jan. 20-Feb. 19.** If the people with whom you associate find you difficult to please, they are apt to make a rapid exit.

♓ Pisces **Feb. 20-March 20.** When having to work with extremely limited resources, play everything close to the vest. If you don't, you could easily get into trouble trying to bluff your way through it all.

♈ Aries **March 21-April 19.** Unless your aims are in harmony with those of your allies, what you attempt to do together will fizzle. Everyone must be working off the same game plan to be effective.

♉ Taurus **April 20-May 20.** In order to be a bit easier on yourself than usual, you should delegate some work responsibilities to your associates. Unless you do so, the chances of everything getting done are slim.

♊ Gemini **May 21-June 20.** If you try to apply a bit of pressure on someone who is indebted to you, this person may disappear rather than comply. He or she isn't ever likely to reciprocate your good turn.

♋ Cancer **June 21-July 22.** Unless the dispersing of family funds is handled with consideration for all parties, it could become a sticky issue within the household for some time.

♌ Leo **July 23-Aug. 22.** Co-workers are apt to emulate your behavior; so if you establish a poor example, nothing is likely to get done properly or even be finished. **BERNICE BEDE OSOL**

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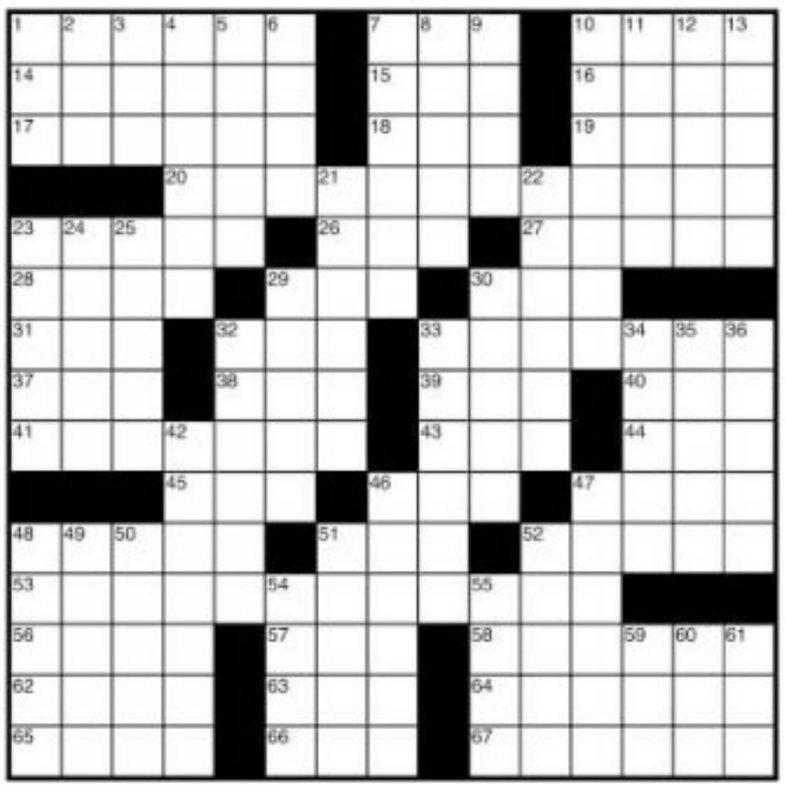
53 Bram Stoker setting
56 __ __-tat
57 Ginnie or Fannie
58 Impose taxes
62 Bit of gossip
63 Cable channel
64 Baked goody
65 Dumas senior
66 Washboard __
67 Happened next

Down
1 PBS relative
2 High dudgeon
3 Calendar divs.
4 Book jacket ads
5 Ritzy rides
6 Corp. biggie
7 Diamond-like gem
8 Ms. Astaire
9 Chevalier musical
10 Taws and aggies
11 From the top
12 Dinnerware
13 Puts up pictures
21 __ over (fainted)
22 Granola kin
23 Mantel
24 Kind of congestion
25 Excel
29 Martinique volcano
30 Cliff inlet
32 Likes and dislikes
33 Puget Sound port
34 Wolf-pack member (hyph.)
35 Susan Lucci vamp
36 Car deals
42 Smith or Jones
46 Places of safety
47 Luaus
48 Bacon unit
49 Egg protector
50 Cisco Kid flick
51 Backup strategy (2 wds.)
52 Plains drifters
54 Gym org.
55 Collar site
59 __ de cologne
60 Sault __ Marie
61 Turf



				5	3		8	
		8			4	2	5	1
								7
6			5	2				4
8		2				7		5
7				8	1			3
4								
2	6	7	4			1		
	5		2	3				

SUDOKU **LEVEL: EASY**

		4				6		
3			9	6				
5	9		8			3	4	
		9			7	8	1	
			3	4	9			
	4	5	6			9		
	8	3			6		9	2
				9	5			8
		1				4		

SUDOKU **LEVEL: HARD**

Solution to yesterday's crossword

C	O	M	A	■	A	R	O	S	E	■	E	L	A	N
A	V	E	C	■	R	E	G	A	L	■	C	U	B	E
R	A	S	H	■	F	A	R	S	I	G	H	T	E	D
P	L	A	I	T	■	C	E	E	■	O	O	Z	E	S
■	■	■	L	E	F	T	S	■	P	I	E	■	■	■
M	A	I	L	E	R	S	■	L	A	N	D	I	N	G
A	T	H	E	N	A	■	W	I	N	G	■	D	O	E
R	T	E	S	■	Y	I	E	L	D	■	H	O	R	N
T	I	A	■	D	I	C	E	■	O	R	E	L	S	E
S	C	R	A	W	N	Y	■	C	R	E	A	S	E	S
■	■	■	B	E	G	■	B	A	A	E	D	■	■	■
A	T	O	L	L	■	M	I	N	■	D	E	C	O	Y
J	A	V	A	T	R	E	N	C	H	■	D	O	G	E
A	R	I	Z	■	A	R	G	U	E	■	I	D	E	A
R	O	D	E	■	E	V	E	N	S	■	N	E	E	R

How to play Sudoku: Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

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new orleans

Eat your way through New Orleans

Few places are as worthy of a culinary-themed vacation as New Orleans. Visitors can quickly fill their itineraries — and stomachs — with nothing but samples of the city's iconic specialties: gumbo, jambalaya, crawfish etouffee, red beans and rice, poboys, muffulettas and beignets. A gastronomic lineup like that needs a careful game plan; here's how we ate our way through the Big Easy in one weekend.

AMBER RAY
amber.ray@metro.us

▶ Brennan's Eggs Benedict are second to their premiere egg dish, Eggs La Nouvelle New Orleans.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF NEW ORLEANS CVB

▶ Don't miss the Seafood Boucherie at Bourbon House.

DAY 1

Breakfast

Cafe Du Monde
800 Decatur St.
504-525-4544
Arrive at Louis Armstrong International Airport on an early flight and have the cabbie drop you off at this quintessential outdoor cafe in the French Market. A cup of coffee au lait (mixed half and half with hot milk) and an order of the famous beignets — fried dough sprinkled with powdered sugar — will fuel the long day ahead. Burn off the calories with a stroll along the Mississippi River, just one block away.

Lunch

Dickie Brennan's Bourbon House
144 Bourbon St.
504-522-0111
Bourbon House is dedicated to local, in-season seafood; the Seafood Boucherie (smoked redfish rillettes, seafood boudin and the chef's daily terrine) is just one savory sample of the Gulf's finest. Adding to the local flavor, the dining room's huge picture windows overlook Bourbon Street. This notorious road is less bead-filled during the afternoon, the perfect time to take in the strip if you're not apt to enjoy it more after hours with an oversized Hurricane cocktail in hand.

Dinner

Sylvain
625 Charles St.
504-265-8123
A newer addition to the French Quarter culinary scene, Sylvain is understated charm with a contemporary mind-set — embodied perfectly in the Roasted Pork Po Boy (topped with sharp provolone and broccoli rabe on ciabatta). Date night here would be hard to beat, particularly if you cap the evening off with live jazz in one of the clubs lining nearby Frenchmen Street.

DAY 2

Breakfast

Brennan's
417 Royal St.
504-525-9711
Wine and dessert for breakfast? Yes, please! Brennan's is an institution in NOLA, a true throwback to old Southern elegance where the meal is served in courses and leisurely enjoyment of the food is encouraged. Does it get any more decadent than Eggs La Nouvelle Orleans — poached eggs served on a bed of lump crabmeat topped with brandy-cream sauce? Actually, yes — Brennan's is known as the birthplace of Bananas Foster.

Lunch

Food festival
French Quarter
There's always something to celebrate in New Orleans. We were in town for the Second Annual New Orleans Oyster Festival, where the turnout defied any notion that Gulf Coast seafood is unsafe to eat post-Deepwater Horizon oil spill. Festival-goers slurped oysters raw, charbroiled and cooked every way in between. "It's a celebration for the oyster itself, and the oyster fishermen. We donate the proceeds to conservatories that are trying to restore wetlands," explained festival board member Chris Berg of New Orleans Fish House, a major seafood supplier in the region.

Your next chance to sample the delicacies of the Louisiana waterways is Sept. 9-11 during the Fifth Annual New Orleans Seafood Festival (www.neworleansseafoodfestival.com).

Dinner

Mr. B's Bistro
201 Royal St.
504-523-2078
With a focus on Creole cuisine, Mr. B's is the right spot for Shrimp & Grits (Gulf shrimp are wrapped in applewood smoked bacon atop grits with red-eye gravy). Afterward, take in one last picturesque night walking through the historic Jackson Square, where the castlelike St. Louis Cathedral sits.

Where to stay

Bourbon Orleans Hotel, 717 Orleans St., 504-523-2222
In the heart of the French Quarter, the Bourbon Orleans was a convenient home base for our culinary tour of the city. www.bourbonorleans.com.

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NOTHING BUT TALK

JIM MCISAAC/GETTY IMAGES

▶ Plaxico Burress was a main talking point going into the game, but Corey Webster and Aaron Ross shut him down.

◗ Jets, Giants matchup is big on lead-up, small on crisp gameplay ◗ Jacobs, Wilkerson ejected after fight

For all the bluster prior to last night's game, neither the Giants nor the Jets lived up to the hype.

The way both sides were jawing, it seemed like it was more than your ordinary third preseason game. Alas, not much happened in the 17-3 Jets win.

Eli Manning ended the game 15-of-30 for 200 yards, with no touchdowns and two interceptions, while most of his throws were checkdowns. About the only wideout to have any success was Hakeem Nicks, who led all receivers with five catches for 71 yards. The running game was spotty at best. Brandon Jacobs had a 25-yard run to start the second half, but his night would end early, as he was ejected just a couple plays later after coming to blows with prized rookie defensive tackle Muhammad Wilkerson.

Big Blue's defensive starters were sharp, however, as they held up their end. They began the game forcing consecutive three-and-outs. The only letdown was a 17-yard touchdown pass from Mark Sanchez to Santonio Holmes on the first play following the two minute warning. Sanchez finished the game 8-of-16 for 64 yards and that one touchdown. Bilal Powell added a rushing touchdown.

Former Giants and Super Bowl hero Plaxico Burress was held without a catch.

TONY WILLIAMS
sports@metro.us

What we saw

1 Uneven offense
We saw some uneven play from the Giants offense, particularly the passing game, as they've yet to find that consistent third-option threat in the slot.

2 Giants' Big D
The defense, despite being riddled with injuries, looked sharp during their tenure. They frustrated Sanchez into a 5-of-11 showing for only 30 yards in the first half.

3 Nick of time
Jets rookie LB Nick Bellore looked good, with a sack and five tackles.

Woodson joins Knicks

He won't be on the court, but the Knicks got some defensive help yesterday anyway.

Former Hawks coach Mike Woodson was officially hired to be an assistant on Mike D'Antoni's staff.

"I sat a year, the first break I had in 26 years, and it gave me an opportunity to reflect," Woodson said. "I'm chomping at the bit to get back to coaching."

Woodson was 206-286 in six seasons in Atlanta, but took the team to the playoffs his final three seasons.

He was fired after losing in the 2010 Eastern semifinals.

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US Open preview

Djokovic, Nadal clear favorites on men's side ● Wozniacki, low-seeded Williams lead women ● Metro breaks it down

Novak Djokovic

MEN

Plenty of history is on the line in the men's draw as the "Big Four" of Novak Djokovic, Rafael Nadal, Roger Federer and Andy Murray compete in the final Grand Slam of 2011.

Can Djokovic continue his incredible season by capturing a third Grand Slam title in 2011? Will Nadal bounce back from a decisive loss to Djokovic in the Wimbledon final and win back-to-back U.S. Open titles? Can Federer, at age 30, reclaim his past glory and add a 17th career major to his haul? Or will Murray finally break through and win the first of his young life?

"One of the top four guys … is going to win this thing," John McEnroe told ESPN. "If you're not one of the top four players in the world, you've gotta beat three of these guys."

Men to watch

- **Novak Djokovic (1-seed)**
  The Serb is enjoying one of the greatest single seasons in tennis history.
- **Rafael Nadal (2-seed)**
  Won four of last six Grand Slam events, including this year's French Open.
- **Dark Horse Pick**
  Mardy Fish (8-seed)
  Beat Nadal in Cincinnati, playing his best tennis ever.

WOMEN

It isn't often that Serena and Venus Williams play spoiler in a Grand Slam event.

But with Serena coming in as the No. 28 seed and Venus unseeded altogether, this isn't your typical Grand Slam.

Three-time Open champ Serena missed nearly a year because of two foot surgeries and blood clots in her lungs. But she is 16-2 overall this season and 12-0 on hardcourts.

She could face No. 4 seed Victoria Azarenka of Belarus in the third round.

A 13-time Major winner and arguably the toughest competitor on the women's tour, Serena is a strong favorite despite her seed.

Venus, a two-time Open winner, has managed just three events in 2011 due to hip and abdominal injuries and a virus. ADAM ZAGORIA

Women to watch

- **Caroline Wozniacki (1-seed)**
  The world's top-ranked player is seeking her first Grand Slam singles title.
- **Maria Sharapova (3-seed)**
  Coming off a victory in Cincinnati, where she beat No. 2-seed Vera Zvonareva.
- **Dark Horse Pick**
  Serena Williams (28-seed)
  Don't bet against her … even as the No. 28 seed.

Serena Williams

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